

(b) if so, the reasons for continuing with temporary alternative channels till date;

(c) the technical reasons for delay in providing optic fibre link with Gunupur Telephone Exchange after completion of cable work thereof;

(d) whether the monitoring of telecommunications system in DET Koraput, Orissa is done on time; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b) Telecommunication links to Gunupur were disrupted due to blasting of a microwave repeater at Gumma by some extremists. The trunk service to Gunupur was, however, restored immediately by installing an 8 channel Open Wire carrier system. In June, 96 it was replaced by one MCPC-VSAT to provide STD service. An Optical Fibre link connecting Gunupur as a permanent arrangement was commissioned on 30.07.97 and is working satisfactorily.

(c) The delay in commissioning of the Optic Fibre connectivity was due to the following reasons:

- (i) In April '97 a 3 phase power feeding transformer at Gunupur OFC developed fault. It was replaced in June, 1997.
- (ii) An end link connecting the OFC station at Gunupur to Berhampur TAX was commissioned in July '97 to extend the circuits.
- (iii) There was delay in the construction of the building at Parlakhemundi, Gunupur and Ramanguda.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The operational Planning cell of CGMT Orissa closely monitors, through technical vigilance report, the working of exchanges, transmission systems in addition to the monitoring of the same by TDE Koraput himself.

1st/Ind Class Passes for Train Journeys

3694. SHRI S. AJAY KUMAR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the minimum pay scale required for getting 1st/Ind class passes for train journeys in the case of Railway Board employees;

(b) the minimum scale required for the same in other departments;

(c) the reasons for discrimination towards Railway Board employees in this regard;

(d) whether the Government allow the employees of Railway Board to opt for either multiple Ind class tickets or the single to and fro upper class tickets or passes as in the case of other departments; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) Eligibility for getting 1st Class pass on privilege account in Indian Railways including Railway Board employees is as follows :

I. Employees appointed prior to 01.08.1969

- (i) drawing pay of Rs. 1530/- or above provided the employees are in a scale the maximum of which is Rs. 2040/- or above.
- (ii) Nurses drawing pay of Rs. 1400/- or above and Lady Health Visitors drawing pay of Rs. 1230/- or above

II. Employees appointed on or after 01.08.1969 and not later than 31.03.1987

- (i) drawing pay of Rs. 1680/- or above provided they are in a scale the maximum of which is Rs. 2200/- or above.
- (ii) Nurses/Lady Health Visitors drawing pay of Rs. 1480/- or above

III. Employees appointed on or after 01.04.1987

Drawing pay of Rs. 2301/- or above or if they are in a scale the minimum of which is Rs. 2000/-.

IV. Eligibility for getting II Class Passes on privilege account in Indian Railways including Railway Board employees is as follows :

All Group 'C' and Group 'D' employees other than those mentioned above.

(b) There is no system of Passes in other Departments.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Mining in Maharashtra

3695. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) the details of private sector companies in the country which have been permitted to undertake mining activities in Maharashtra;

(b) the terms and conditions laid down for permitting private sector companies to undertake mining activities;

(c) whether the Government are aware that the private sector companies are violating the norms and conditions of the Government and illegally conducting mining activities; and

(d) if so the action taken by the Government in this regard?